

February 19, 2003

Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service,
CC Docket No. 96-45**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

My colleagues, Gene Dejordy, Mikal Thomsen, and I, made a presentation on January 15th to Commissioner Bob Rowe of the Montana Public Service Commission. Commissioner Rowe's aide, Mike Lee also attended the meeting. On February 6th, Mr. Dejordy and Mr. Thomsen made a similar presentation to Commissioner Nan Thompson of the Alaska Public Utilities Commission.

At each meeting, Western Wireless addressed the issues raised in the *Referral Order* regarding competitive universal service in the docket referred to above, FCC 02-307 (released Nov. 8, 2002) and the questions that were expected to be raised by the Joint Board in a related public notice in the same proceeding.

If you have any questions, then please feel free to call me at 425-586-8736.

Respectfully submitted,

James Blundell
Director of External Affairs
Western Wireless Corp.